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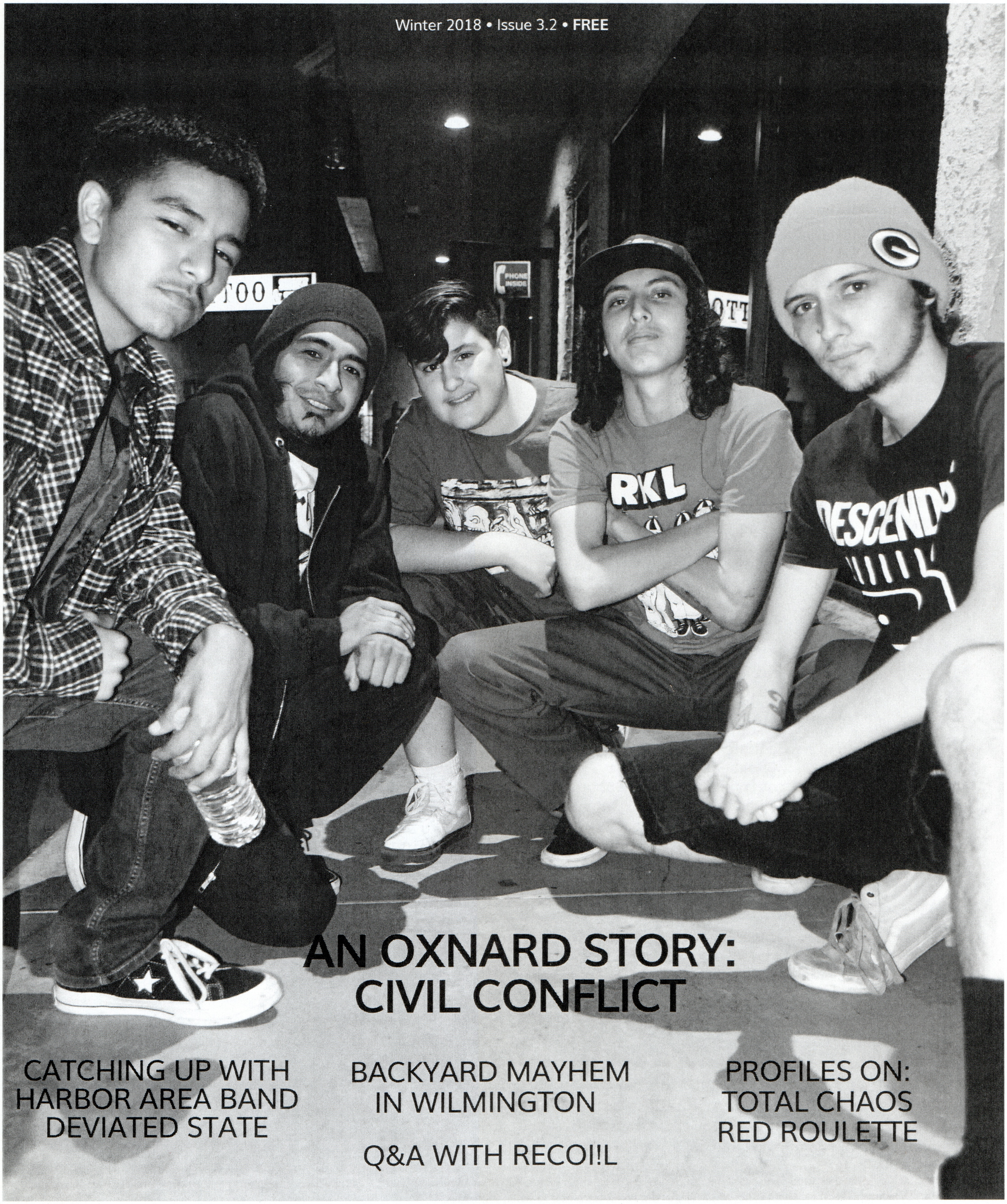

Winter 2018 • Issue 3.2 • **FREE**

AN OXNARD STORY: CIVIL CONFLICT

CATCHING UP WITH HARBOR AREA BAND DEVIATED STATE

BACKYARD MAYHEM IN WILMINGTON

Q&A WITH RECOI!L

PROFILES ON:
TOTAL CHAOS
RED ROULETTE

THIS IS AN "AD"

Yea: D.I.Y. Punk. Hardcore. Zines. Backyard Shows. The Pit. Vinyl. Cassettes. Skateboarding. Los Angeles. The Valley. Orange County. Inland Empire. San Diego. Print Journalism. Newspapers. Books. Open Minds. Ambition. Cameras. Politically Incorrect. Cheap Beer. Dirty mouths. Tattoos. Well-Thought Arguments. Keeping Your Word. Sexual Freedom. Personal Choice. Offending People. Forward. Read. Think. Act

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Know when you're being used to push a narrative that furthers someone else's career, or to help a company sell one more T-shirt. There's nothing wrong with that, but get what you deserve out of the deal without being painted as just another stereotype.

Read. Think. Act. Always.

Welcome to Paradigm Winter 2018.

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TALES FROM THE 805

They're humble as hell, with good heads on their shoulders. And, as one fan put it, "These guys rip." Meet Oxnard band Civil Conflict.

OXNARD, CALIF. – "He'll be here in 15 minutes," Civil Conflict lead guitarist A.K. Tapia said into a mic.

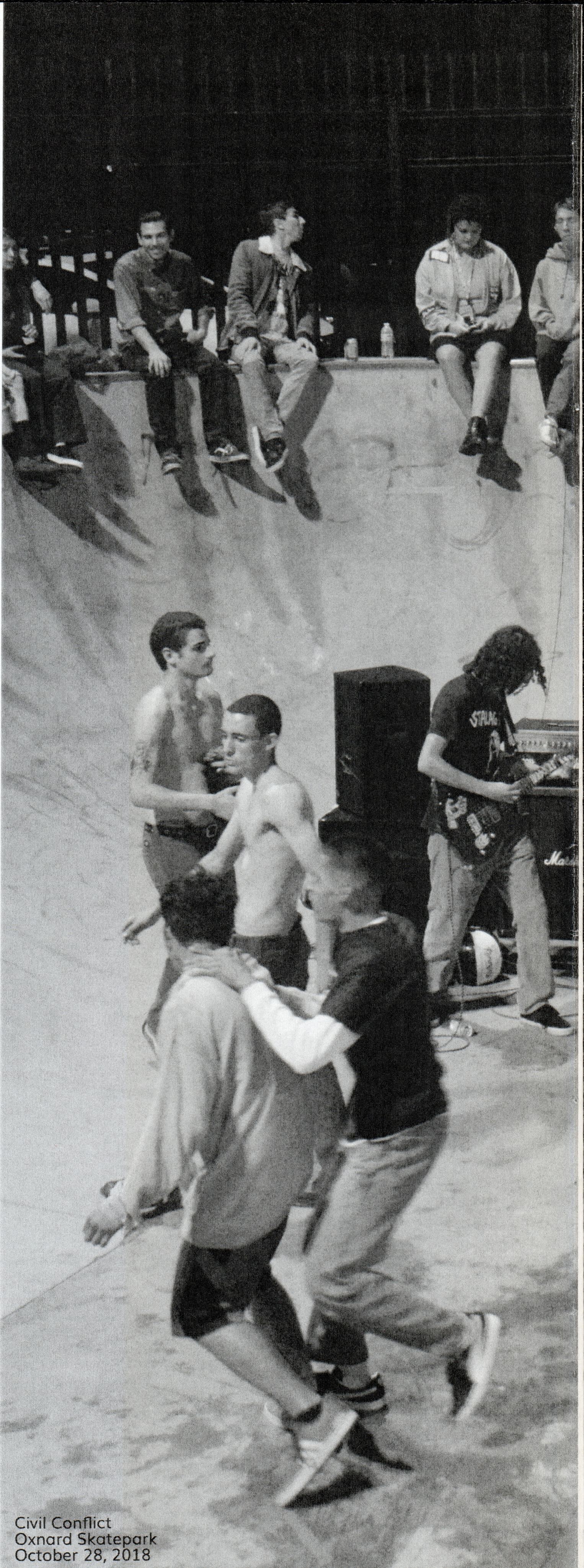
Tapia was talking to a crowd of kids lining the perimeter of the large bowl inside the Oxnard Skatepark. The "he" in that announcement was Civil Conflict singer Dorian Hill. It wasn't the first delay of the evening though; the generator blew out early into South Bay band 1034's set.

Fifteen minutes passed. Tapia told the crowd it would be another 10 minutes and the final PSA, five minutes. At least it was counting down.

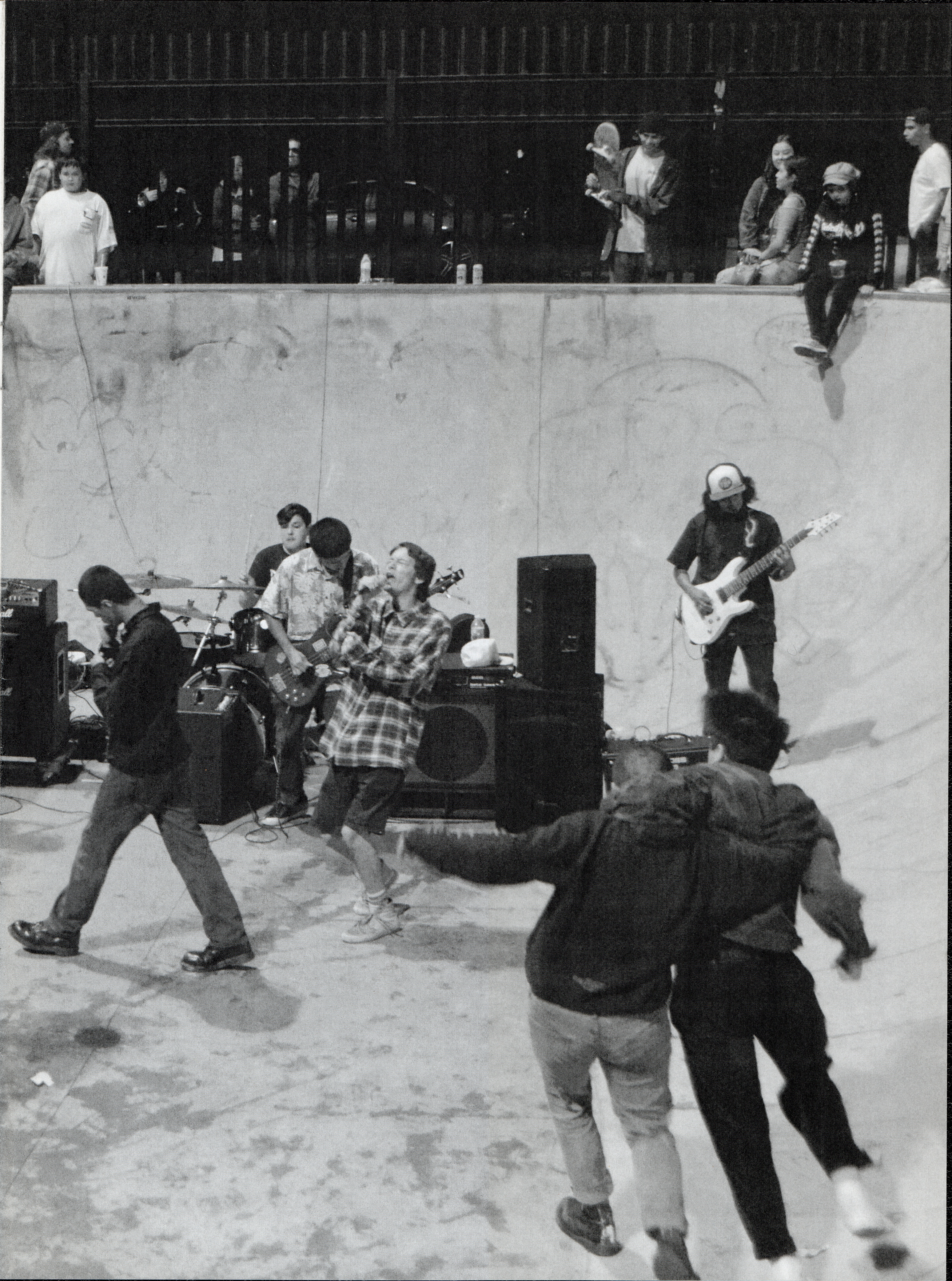
Eventually, the blur of Hill's silhouette could be made out, racing in from the entrance and then down into the bowl wasting no time starting the set, which was inspired enough to get people and skaters into the pit.

Weeks before Civil Conflict was at the VFW in Baldwin Park and, following this local gig, they drove two hours to Long Beach. In other words, they get around.

"There's not too many punks back home," Hill said of Oxnard as he and the rest of the band stood outside DiPiazza's where they had just finished a highly energized set that caused a couple injuries – serious enough for the sound guy to warn the next band if any more people got hurt, he was going to shut it down.



Civil Conflict
Oxnard Skatepark
October 28, 2018



"The young ones are there, but they don't really support the local bands," Tapia added about their local scene.

"They just go to the bigger shows. You'll play a backyard show with a bunch of local bands and it'll be like 10, 15 people," Hill said. "And then you'll go to a Nardfest or something like that with T.S.O.L. or Ill Repute and there's all these people. It's, like, where'd you come from?"

It's slowly changing, pointed out bassist Daniel Altamira. Since the band's founding some three years ago, he said they do see more of the younger crowd supporting local bands. Still, it's not the same as what they encounter when they travel outside Oxnard where it's, what they called, kid band after kid band playing shows. It's hard to say what's causing the proliferation suddenly of younger bands and if it's simply the cycling in of a new generation or other factors.

"I've thought about it and I don't know because it's not necessarily like there's anything nowadays that pushes kids towards punk," Hill said. "I used to be pretty against the whole rap and trap and all that shit. But I think a lot of that shit kind of helped contribute to our scene, too. Because these young kids that are pissed, some of them realize some of that music doesn't really have the right message, so they find punk instead."

The majority of Civil Conflict in one way or another fell into the music via relatives.

Drummer David Stalsworth (aka Baby Firmz) is the youngest of the bunch at 13 – a fact a fan squealed over after approaching them following their Long Beach set to shower them with praise. Stalsworth grew up with parents into metal and punk, providing the gateway, he said, into firmer footing for himself to eventually find nardcore.

"I'm mostly self taught," he said of the drums, "but then for more of the technique aspect I've gotten lessons."

There's a similar story with Tapia, whose parents were also into metal. However, the genre didn't necessarily stick.

"With metal there wasn't that connection, like in your face type of feeling that punk gave me," Tapia said. "And it [punk] also gave me a sense of community that I could be a part of. With punk, you could go to a show and you could meet the guys in the band, you could get up on stage and push into something."

Hill described his father as an "old school punker dude" from Oxnard who brought his son along to concerts as early as the age of 2, making him a regular part of the scene.

Anthony Moran, on rhythm guitar, said he always wanted to play music.

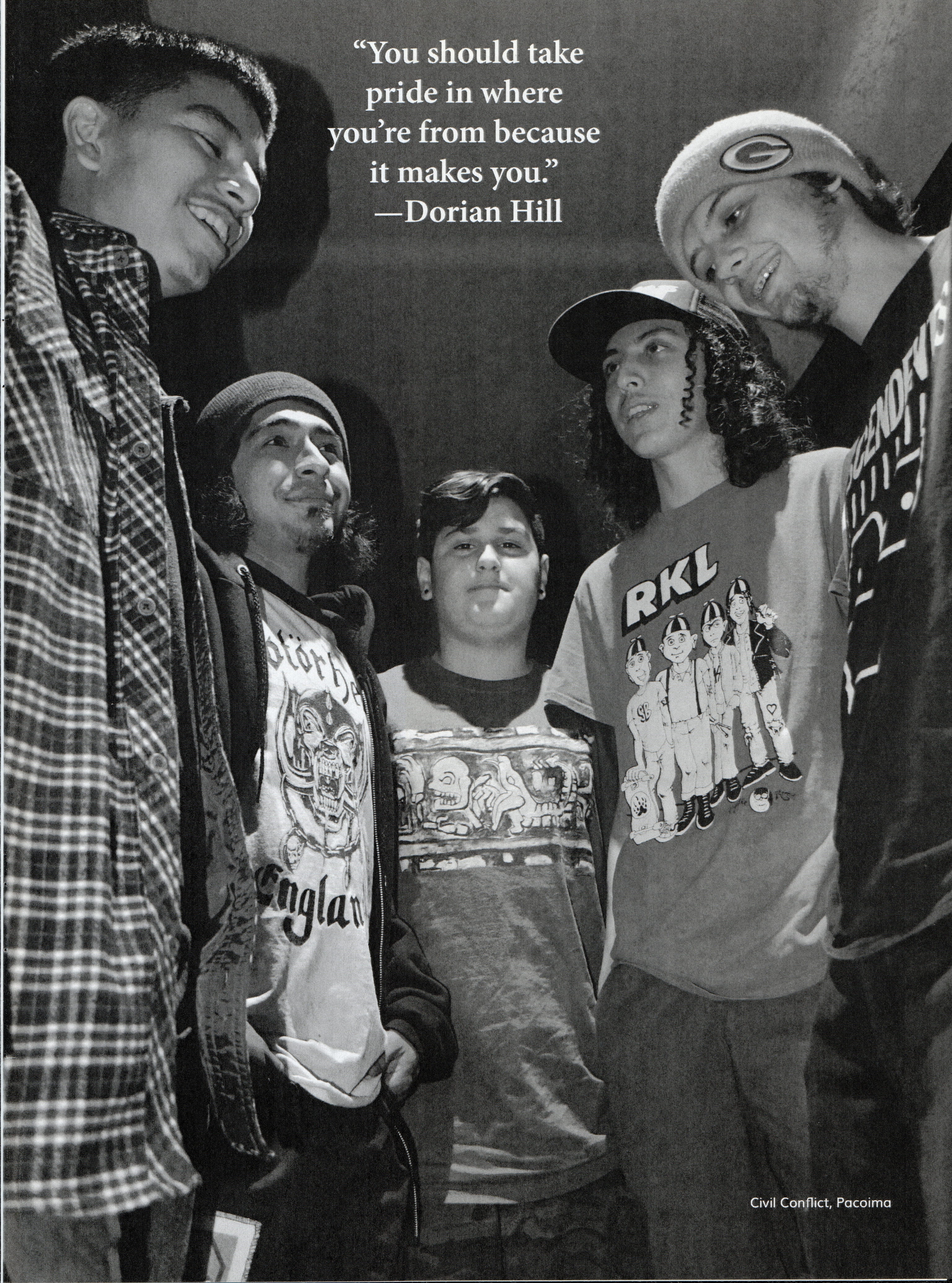
"I always wanted to make it my passion," he said. "So I started playing guitar and then it just stuck with me. I just kept sticking with it and it molded me into who I am now."

Altamira, who first began hearing punk in skate video games, was gifted a guitar for his birthday when he was 13, made an attempt to learn and then didn't touch the instrument for a year after getting frustrated with it. He picked it back up, but ultimately transitioned to the bass.

It's skateboarding, much like other bands in the scene, that partially forms the backbone to the Civil Conflict DNA, but it's being born and raised in Oxnard that's shaped them as people and their outlooks on life. It's a source of pride, particularly when looking at it through the lens of music history. They're part of a scene that includes bands such as Dr. Know, Ill Repute, Aggression, Stalag 13 and on.

"Oxnard's not very well known. It's very under the radar, I

Pacoima
November 10, 2018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"You should take pride in where you're from because it makes you."
—Dorian Hill

Civil Conflict, Pacoima

Pacoima
November 10, 2018

“Nardcore’s probably the best scene to be honest.... It’s the sickest bands; the sickest people.”
—A.K. Tapia

guess, and when people hear Oxnard they’re like what the fuck is Oxnard,” Altamira said.

“But then when you come to places like here [in Long Beach], everyone knows,” Tapia said. “You come to a punk show and L.A. and [nardcore] is what everyone knows Oxnard for.”

“It’s just the culture there that kind of puts the sound into the music,” Hill said. “There’s just a certain type of music you play living there because of what’s around you.”

“The bands that kind of paved the way for us to even go on this whole voyage into music, they’re older from the 80s,” Moran said. “So they did pave the way, but we also have to continue it.”

And they are. Civil Conflict has a double meaning, a reference to a civilian war of sorts in a society, but also a disagreement that can be ironed out without aggression or fist fights. They sing about everything from skateboarding to politics, and the broader idea of critical thinking and “not falling into certain ways of thinking,” Moran said of some of their songs.

“A lot of the kids in Oxnard are just so nihilistic and oblivious to everything,” Hill said. “They just don’t care and if you tell them they’re just going to tell you you’re wasting your time. I think that’s what comes out in our music. We’re trying to put these ideas out like think for yourself, be aware of these situations.... Everything’s so shitty and everyone’s always pissed. You’d think the way things are, there’d be more punks.”

And for being so young, they’re thoughtful about why that isn’t the case, blaming social media and what Tapia said is an inability for people to think on their own without relying on Twitter to formulate an opinion or earn more invisible points in the game of who has the most clout.

The families that supported their music interests, mixed with skate and hailing from Oxnard gives Civil Conflict a unique point of view that dips into nardcore codes, among other references to decades past, for a sound that’s wiser and more seasoned than their ages would have you believe.

It’s a bit of an endearing anecdote, but before their sets cap, Hill always makes it a point to introduce every single band member before saying they’re from Oxnard, Calif. Sure, they’re not the only band to do that and won’t be the last, but not everyone does that. Some bands don’t even bother telling the crowd who they are.

“You should take pride in where you’re from because it makes you,” Hill said. “It really puts in a lot and I think Oxnard has a lot of good to teach people. There’s some bad, like it can get pretty fucking boring and there’s not stuff to do sometimes and there’s drugs and junkies or whatever, but there’s hardworking people and families that go to work every day past retirement age because they have to. A lot of kids get taught that from a really young age and there’s a lot of people with good work ethics.”

“Nardcore’s probably the best scene to be honest,” Tapia said matter of factly, somehow managing to skirt around sounding arrogant, as the rest of them laughed. “To be honest, it’s the sickest bands; the sickest people.”

Their ultimate aim for Civil Conflict is pretty simple: to play more shows. Do they want more for the band? It depends on how “more” is defined.

“It’s a trick question for a punk, isn’t it?” Hill mused.

“We just want to keep playing,” Altamira said.

“Yeah, just keep playing as much as we can and reach as many people as we can,” Tapia said.

The best way to end this may be to loop back to where this story started, which is in Oxnard

“Oxnard everything,” Hill said

“Probably said Oxnard like over 100 times,” Tapia said.

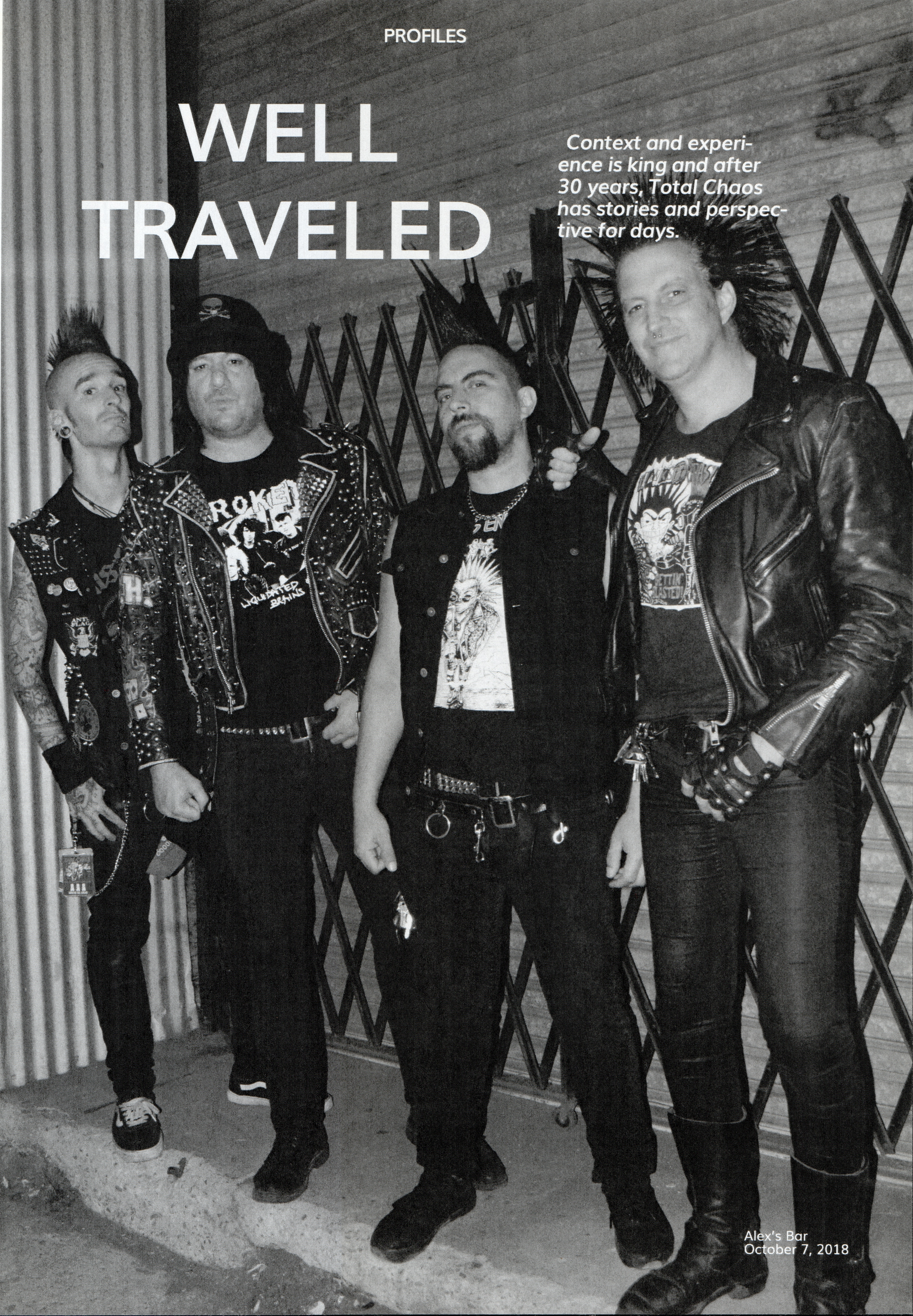
Actually, it was more like 20 and his comment doesn’t stop them from continuing to heap compliments on the city.

“Oxnard’s cool. It’s like a melting pot of everything. Usually immigrants are down there just working trying to make a living,” Altamira said. “There’s always been a really good music scene, not just in punk, but in hip hop too.”

“It means a lot to the kids down there,” Hill said, “when you can get something with Oxnard’s name on it.”

WELL TRAVELED

Context and experience is king and after 30 years, Total Chaos has stories and perspective for days.


LIQUIDATED BRAINS

Alex's Bar
October 7, 2018

LONG BEACH, CALIF. – Rob Chaos is sitting in the driver seat of the Total Chaos tour van. It's non-descript and white, parked in the shadow of trees outside Alex's Bar. His voice is gravelly; yours would be too after belting through songs such as "Babylon" and "Police Rat" during a show that ended less than 30 minutes prior.

That's on top of wrapping the band's Riot Across Europe Tour in the spring, trailed by the Chaos and Anarchy Across the U.S.A. Tour that had the band zigzagging around North America only to cap here in Long Beach, just months shy of the band's 30th year.

Guitarist Shawn Smash motions to join Rob by the tour van, as he explains he lives in Palm Springs, but is making his way back to Riverside that evening, where Total Chaos has had its recording and rehearsal studio for some 20 years. The two go back and forth on whether it was '98 or '99 when they began recording there before Shawn calls it saying, "Something like that. Close enough."

Half the Chaos family – Shawn and drummer Miguel Conflict – are here in Southern California. The other half – Rob and bassist Geordy Justify – live overseas. Geordy is from Holland, while Rob took up residence in Germany 12 years ago.

"Go there and you'll see why I went there," Rob says. "You won't want to come back."

He's pressed for further explanation on what makes Germany so great and would he ever come back to Southern California.

"Why? Do you want to live in hell?" he asks almost aghast.

"Yeah, he has different opinions on things," Smash says as he exits the conversation.

"You don't like freedom?" Rob continues. "You like to live under oppression and slavery? That's what America is. Total oppression. It's not as oppressive as China, but it's getting there every single day. Germany is totally free. They spend all their money on the people, not war. America spends, oh my god, like 70 percent of their taxpayer money on war. America's bankrupt just to let you know."

A few minutes later Miguel and Geordy join the conversation after lugging most of their gear out of the bar.

They've all had a few days off since the last show to work on the website and putting the rest of their music up on Spotify. Coming down off the highs – and sometimes lows – of tour life is now second nature to them.

"When I got back I didn't talk to anybody for about a week," Miguel says. "I just hid in my house and watched TV and hung out with my girlfriend. I did nothing, but then after that I got back into recording in the studio and doing the drummer for hire thing."

"For me, it was like one day and then the next day I was back to business," Rob says.

That's not necessarily surprising for a veteran who does the booking for not just Total Chaos, but has also booked for Acidez, The Exploited, Funeral Dress, Lower Class Brats and on.

"He was born booking tours," Miguel explains.

"'Cause I'm crazy. That's why," Rob adds with a smile.

The conversation runs all over the place. When Rob brings up seeing his 20-year-old daughter, who is pregnant with a boy, the conversation somehow seamlessly transitions to birth rates and how more boys are being born. It's the result, Rob says, of manmade manipulation of the environment. That topic then turns to fluoride in the water, which Miguel and Rob are in agreement, makes people stupid and docile (some have argued fluoride need not be ingested for the dental benefits and a good portion ends up sitting in our bodies unable to be excreted). That leads into how Shawn drinks Smartwater, but it's so expensive.

Miguel snaps the group out of the stroll through tangents.

"Do you have any other questions?" he politely asks. "Sorry we...."

It's hard to wax poetic or get too into the muck of things when you're standing in a nearly empty parking lot in Long Beach. The question of where to even begin for one of the scene's more storied street punk bands is a tough conversation to broach.

"I always thought I'd want it to go on forever," Rob says slowly of whether he could have ever anticipated Total Chaos going on for this long, "but I didn't know for sure it would happen. To be honest, I didn't know. You've gotta understand, how am I supposed to predict the future? I didn't know."

"Especially because this industry's really unpredictable," Geordy says. "You never know what's going to happen. It

> "I always thought I'd want it to go on forever, but I didn't know for sure it would happen."
> —Rob Chaos

Bluespade 75 Studios
East L.A.
September 22, 2018

could be over tomorrow."

Maybe that's why they work so hard to make sure it doesn't. Just as they cap this tour, they're set to begin as early as the end of this year, a tour with the U.S. Bombs. They're also in the recording studio putting together some demos for the next album, a best of compilation due out in late 2019 or the year after. They're also working on an anniversary tour for next year that will take them throughout the world, again. Geordy thinks stops in South Africa could be a possibility, which would be a first for them.

"We're addicted to playing," Miguel says. "I don't want to be doing anything else, you know? I don't want to work a 9-to-5 job every single day. Even though it's difficult, the struggle's worth it in the end 'cause I'm my own boss. I really like that."

"It's also, when we come to different states, people come up to us afterwards. Not every single day, but almost, and at least one person will be like 'You made my day,' and hearing that, it touches you," Geordy says. "We don't want to stop. My first ever show for the band, a girl came up to me after, 'Thank you so much for playing. I really wanted to see you for a long time. I've been depressed for years and Total Chaos dragged me through that and I'm starting to feel better now.' That just blew my mind. It's going to all these crazy places, meeting different kinds of people through the punk scene. This whole world that we live in, brings all that together."

Perhaps there's no more tangent a way to paint that picture than a 2016 show in Indonesia that drew some 5,000 people.

"This was not even a festival; it was just a local [show]," Rob says. "They were all there to see us and even the shows that we missed were over 1,000, 2,000 people. We'll never pull that in L.A. ever. Only megalithic bands. Not even The Exploited would pull those kinds of numbers nowadays in L.A., and so that makes Indonesia the biggest punk scene in the world – for real punk, unless you want to have Green Day."

The comment, which steers the conversation down yet another new path, isn't a slam on the aforementioned band, either. No one's standing on soapboxes, proclaiming one group is better than the other. It's a statement of one of the nuances to the genre differentiating the bands that still maintain a largely DIY, guerilla-style approach to how they operate and those that end up transitioning away from backyards and small venues to major labels and all that comes with commercial success.

"Green Day's on a major label; they're on the radio. They were on major video play rotation," Rob says. "This is not underground punk. The majority of real punk is underground, and that is definitely different. I like Green Day and they're good friends of mine, but I'm just talking about real punk that's DIY like it always was and has been for decades. It's unbelievable what Indonesia and places like that pull off. It's just, oh my god. I don't even know how to explain it."

Commercialization of punk and other subcultures for that matter is nothing new, but given the subject's come up, it begs the question of what they think of the Vans-backed documentary "Los Punks: We Are All We Have" and whether it ultimately helped the scene. The Orange County sneaker company, which is aiming to reach sales of $5 billion by 2023, is part of the publicly-traded VF Corp. (parent to brands such as The North Face, JanSport and Timberland).

"Honestly, it did shed a light to a lot of the world what was going on in the L.A. scene, the underground scene," says Miguel, who appeared in parts of that film. "I think in a way, it did help it. It did help a lot of the bands that were there get a good start because they got some exposure throughout the whole series and, actually, I enjoyed being a part of it."

"It helps in a way that people actually get to see that maybe we look extreme and scary, but we're not," Geordy says. "We're normal people; we just look different and have a different way of thinking, but we're good people and we try to do our part in society. At least, that's what I'd like to believe is that we're nice people."

They're nice enough not to box themselves into labels or be militant about what punk is. They're nice enough to where they're breaking up fights (such was the case with Geordy earlier that evening, dashing off the stage in the middle of a song to break up a scuffle), or mingle with fans. That's part of what's earned them a loyal following across the decades. They don't place barriers between themselves and those who like their music. That's clear, considering the stamps they've amassed on their passports.

"We all have our own story; that's the nice thing," Geordy says. "Most people in the punk scene have their own story. We're in this band. We've got four people. My parents are old punks so I grew up in this world. I don't know any different. Miguel grew up in L.A. He grew up at a time when the peace punk scene was big. Rob – when the punk scene was big and there were lots of protests and riots. We all have our own little thing that brought us to where we are now."

"If I hadn't gotten into punk, I probably would have ended up being in a gang because a lot of my family was in gangs and stuff like that," Miguel says. "We're around a lot of that stuff in the communities we're living in so it's kind of hard not to be involved in that somehow. I could have gone in that direction. Once I discovered punk, it just took me to a whole different reality. It hasn't been the same since."

That reality has also pushed the band into being proactive with Total Chaos a founding member or affiliated with organizations over the years, such as United Valley Punks, Orange

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September 22, 2018

County Peace Punks and Alternative Gathering Collective.

"Being a part of the political peace punk scene really opened my eyes to the whole political side of it and that it's not just 'Let's go get fucked up, get drunk and get hammered,'" Miguel says. "It brought some ideology to my whole existence, you know what I mean?"

"Where's Shawn?" Rob's voice says, cutting into the conversation. The singer had earlier gotten out of the van and walked off to begin packing up.

Geordy explains he left a while ago. Rob's itching to go at this point as friends who had been overseeing the merch table bring out any remaining items from the bar and say their good-byes.

> "Being a part of the political peace punk scene really opened my eyes to the whole political side of it and that it's not just 'Let's go get fucked up, get drunk and get hammered.' It brought some ideology to my whole existence, you know what I mean?"
> —Miguel

"Shawn is someone special. He mixes styles," Geordy says, going on to say how nervous he was to initially play with Shawn, given he grew up listening to Total Chaos. "Shawn is so talented, I was like, 'If I suck, I'm going to hear it and that would have meant the end of my music career. If he had said 'Dude, you fucking suck,' I would have put my bass on the wall and never touched it. But it worked out fine. I have massive respect for the guy."

"Geordy, can we pack this up 'cause I don't know how you pack it," Rob says.

"Help us out, bro," Miguel adds as he's now stooped over some equipment.

"I'll do it, yeah," Geordy says, not moving from where he's standing.

"Cause I want to get out of here," Rob adds, driving home the point if it wasn't clear already.

Geordy goes back to finishing his thoughts.

"We all have our own way of doing things and our own habits.... Don't put it in yet," he says realizing they've started to load and it's not his way of packing.

It's late now, at nearly 2 a.m. The doors to Alex's Bar are closed and anyone who was lingering in the parking lot is long gone. The van's back doors were flung open a while ago, and the gear is sprawled out on the ground, like a taunting game of Tetris. The tour is over, that evening's set is over and so is this interview, except for one last question: If Total Chaos had enough drive to make it to 30, do they foresee pushing through another 30?

Rob sighs loudly. Maybe the thought tires him; maybe the thought of telling his bandmates one more time he wants to get out of there, makes him ill.

Geordy, the youngest in the lineup, doesn't hesitate: "I do. I'm 23, you know."

"Uh, he can do 30 'cause I'm not doing it," Rob says.

"Con Chaos, bro," Miguel adds.

"Miguel will still be there, dude," Geordy says resolutely. "You'll be like [U.K. Subs singer] Charlie Harper."

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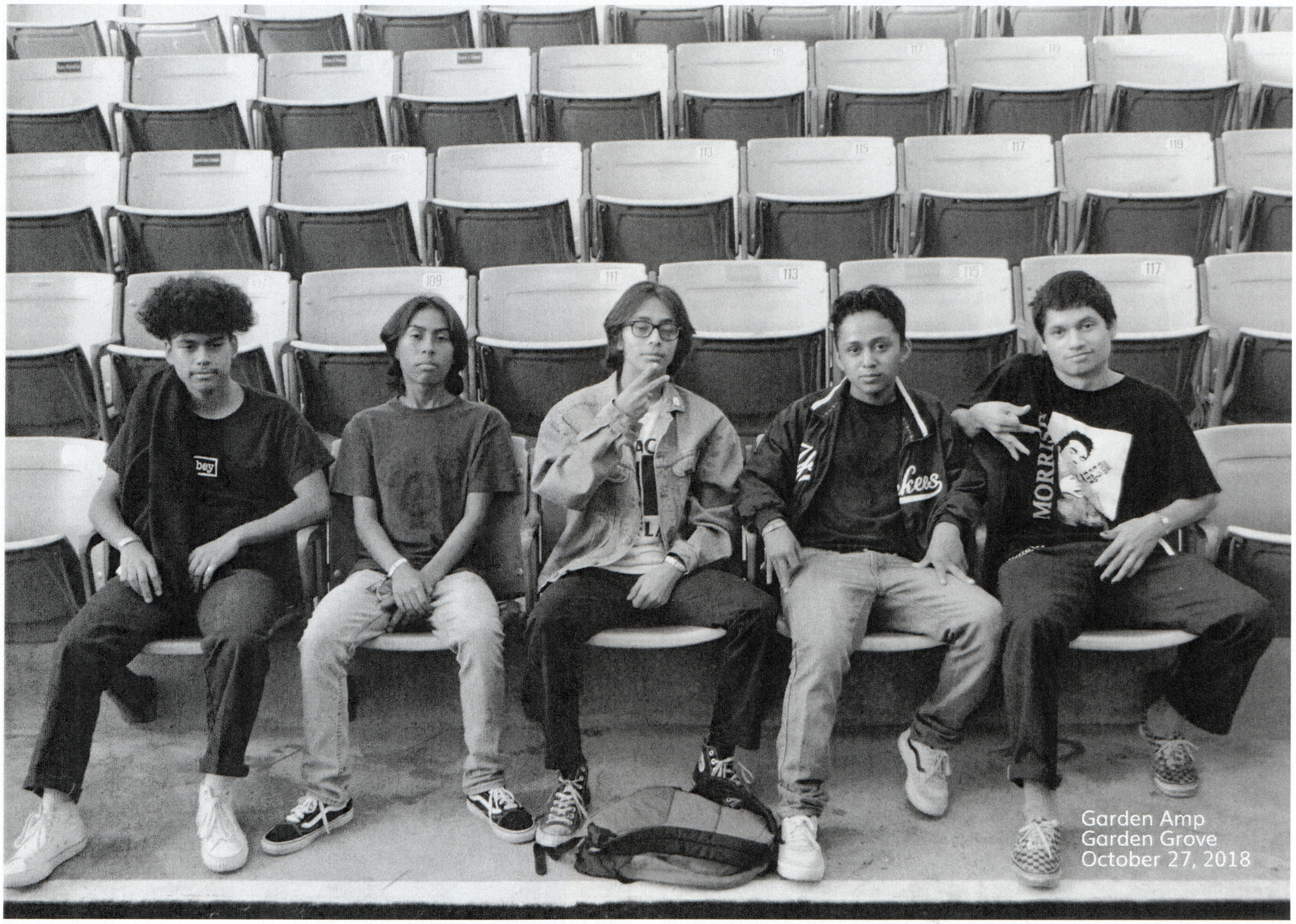
East L.A.
September 22, 2018

ART OF THE IMPROV

Artsy, improvised, garage punk you can bang your head to coming at you, courtesy of Red Roulette.



Garden Amp
Garden Grove
October 27, 2018

GARDEN GROVE, CALIF. – He almost lost his job. Well, let's just say his employment status is up in the air.

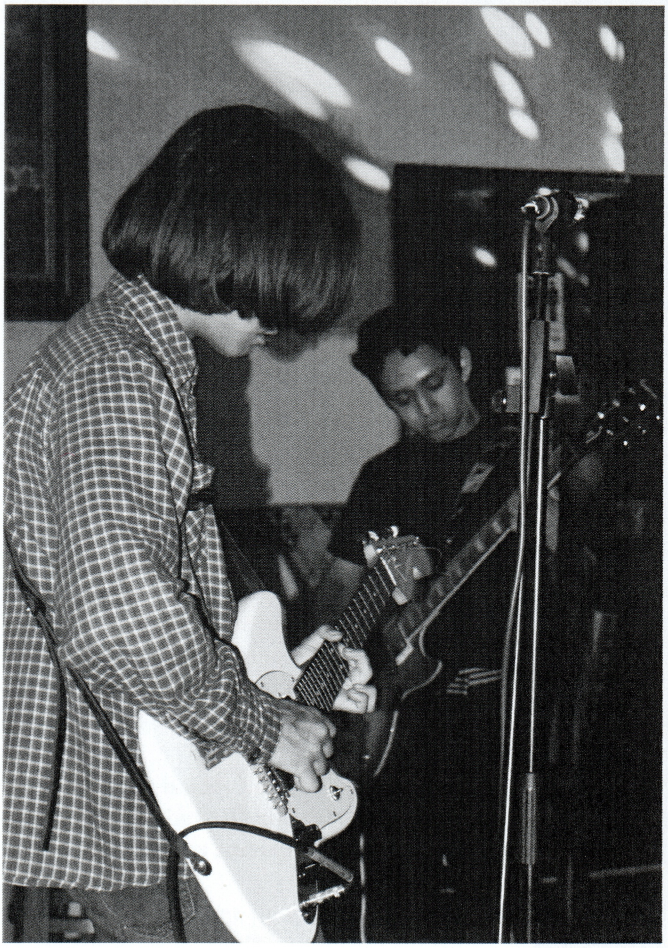
"I was supposed to work today and no one would fucking cover me. I was like, I'll get a new job so I lost my job for the band," said a sheepish Danny Rico, one of three guitarists for Santa Ana band Red Roulette. "I was there for a month, but I'm broke as fuck. I'll figure it out."

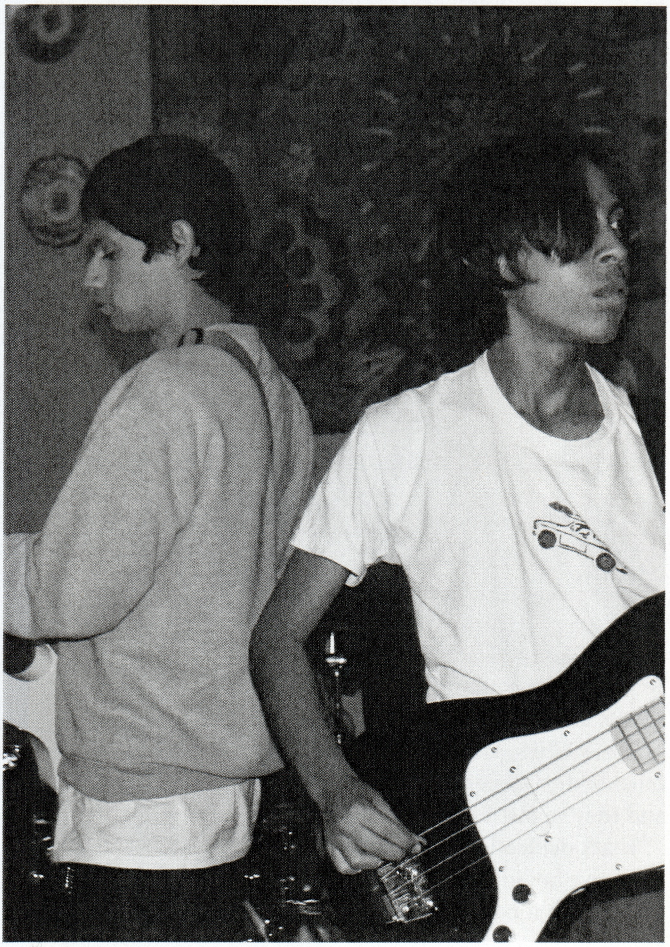
Rico, along with the rest of his band mates – singer and guitarist Brandon Mazon, guitarist Chris Munoz, drummer Yoshi Garcia and bassist Irvin Martinez – are sitting just outside the Garden Grove Amphitheatre. It's days before Halloween at the FYGGY Fest and they've just finished their set.

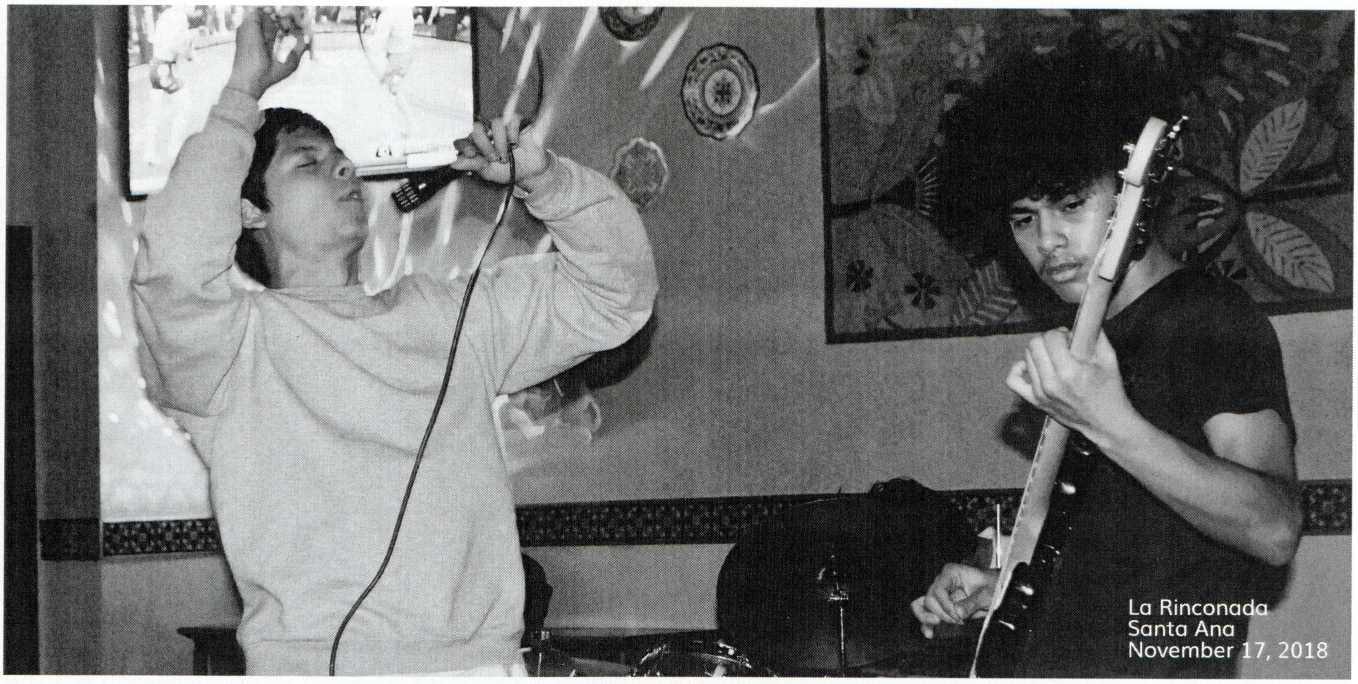
"That's dedication to play the gig," Munoz said of Rico's decision.

The five are in agreement the band comes first and say it's any means necessary to get there when it comes to making a gig or just playing. Garcia didn't even own a drum set

La Rinconada
Santa Ana
November 17, 2018







for the first three months of the band's existence. Instead, he'd play drums via an app on his phone that was connected to an amp. Luck was on their side when someone from Guitar Center ended up giving him some drums a week before their first show.

"There's always a way," Munoz said. "Where there's a will, there's a way."

"There's always going to be shit that pops up," Rico added.

Red Roulette, at just about 10 months old now, is best described by its members as experimental punk rock – a kind of proliferation of noise rooted in all forms of good music. When experimental is tacked onto anything, it usually elicits eye rolls and automatic assumptions of something perhaps hippy dippy. In the case of Red Roulette – which gets its name from the game and the idea of taking their shot – the label experimental punk would seem oxymoronic for a genre rooted in brevity, where even two minutes is considered one-minute too long.

Instead, Red Roulette is the culmination of five minds unencumbered by the genre – or any genre for that matter – and history, definitions or rules. They apply a myriad of influences – from the Velvet Underground to Black Sabbath and Black Flag, along with the blues and folk. Their songs, some of which are instrumental, tend to last several minutes with "Waiting" topping out at over seven minutes.

"That's what I love," Rico said. "When music can transcend boundaries that people make, you know? When you're just living a lifestyle. I started playing every day just to play so I'm not held back by the instrument anymore. It's spiritual."

"I wanted to do something heavier and with more meaning to it, while being real experimental with noises," Mazon said of the band's impetus.

"Our method, we just go with how we're feeling. It's an energy-type thing," Rico said of their process and what results. "We have a very free form, like improv side. We just feel it out. It's very in the moment sometimes."

"It's intense," Mazon went on to say. "Bringing that intensity from punk and also the do-it-yourself [ethos]. We do everything ourselves most of the time. We book our own shows. We make our own merch and we put out our own music."

Rico has been making art prints that were originally going to be sold at shows, but instead they're handing them out for free. They're currently trying to work out a tour for the summer that would take them to Oregon. They're also in the midst of recording a full-length album expected out some time next year, which they've agreed has been arduous.

"It's fun at times," Munoz said. "But then it goes back to being stressful."

The full-length follows an EP and the "Waiting" single that they've so far released via their own label FEED/back, recorded in Martinez's garage and Mazon's living room.

Their release cadence has been just as busy as their show schedules, having played in their hometown Orange County and driving as far as Victorville, La Puente, Moorpark and Stanton.

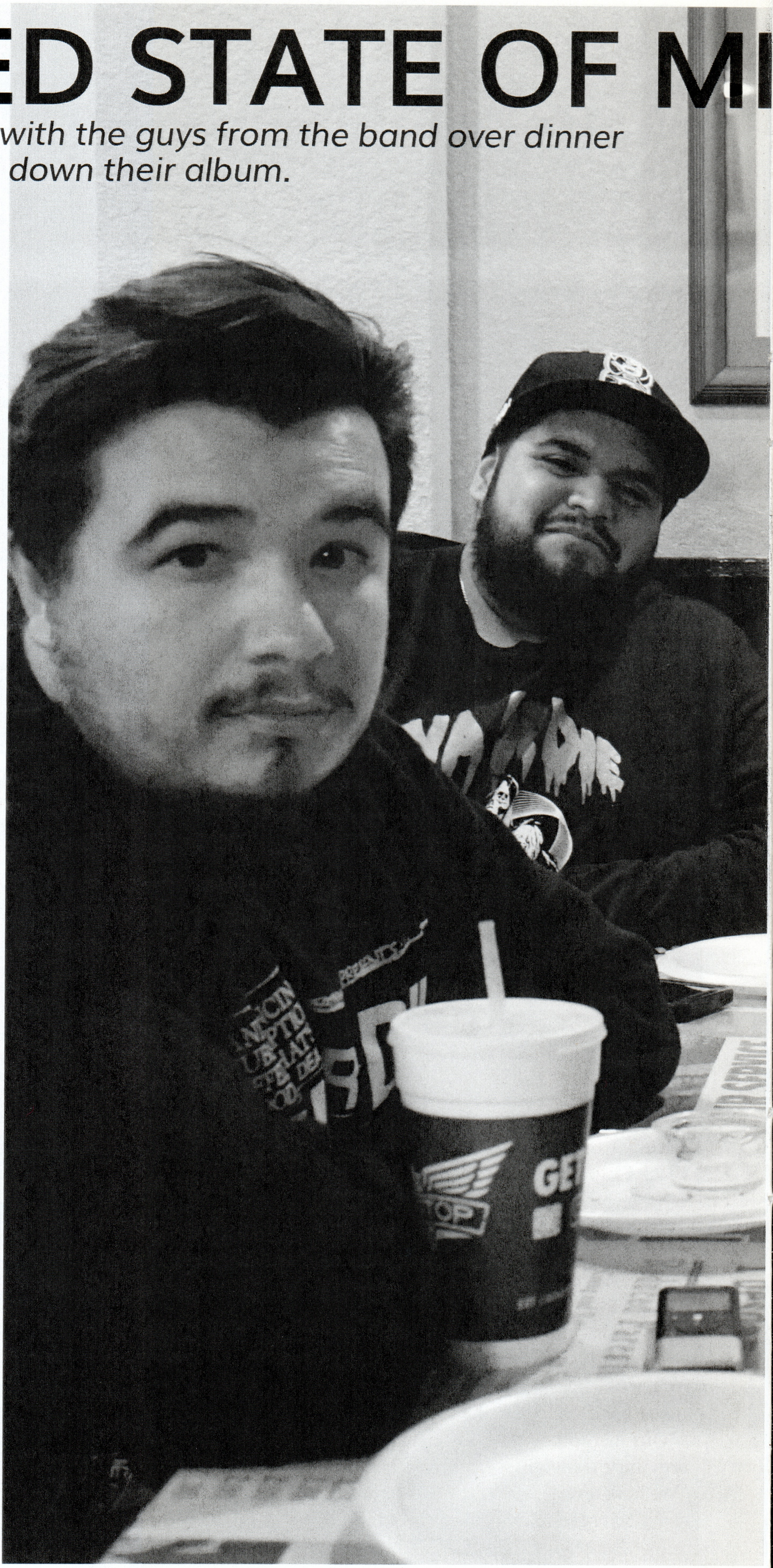
"There's a lot of bands that wait a year, then they release something," Mazon said. "We don't really care. If we have music, we release it. There was an artist and he said some bands think they can afford to not release music every year just because they think it looks better like it makes it seem like they work more. In reality, it's all the same shit. And he said if you're actually smart with it, you'd know you don't really have time to wait a whole year to release it. If you have it, release it. It's a work ethic. A punk work ethic. Don't stop."

This mentality isn't so much driven by a need to remain relevant or in front of people either, Mazon said.

"The way I see it, I'm putting out a message and it's up to them to interpret it," he said. "You can't do things just because people are going to want you to do them. Just do what you want, because the moment you start doing what others expect of you, then there's no point to it. You're doing it for them and not yourself. That's the way we see it. That's our work ethic. We just make a lot of music – a lot of different sounding music."

DEVIATED STATE OF MI

Catching up with the guys from the band over dinner as they break down their album.



Ramen. Tacos. *Real* tacos... Ice cream? We're sitting in Deviated State bassist Johnny Ramirez's truck brainstorming where to eat. That last idea didn't win over drummer Caveman.

"I came for dinner," he reminds everyone in an even keel.

Funny enough, the last time Deviated State appeared in Paradigm was over three years ago. It was summer and we were shooting the breeze outside a Cold Stone Creamery in Carson, talking about the album they planned on releasing the following year. Fast-forward to today and we're at a Wingstop in Torrance talking about that album (released this year), police abuse of power, ideal camera angles that avoid the dreaded double chin and where exactly everyone fancies themselves and the band in the future.

Little has changed. They're still the same affable, super genuine guys that make an outsider feel right at home. No pretension. No egos. Joey T. Banks, on vocals, is a curious guy with a talent for good songwriting; Caveman is Mr. Suave, always with the friendly grin except when pounding away on the drums; guitarist Sean is the straight-shooter, quiet but deep and funny once you get him going; and Johnny – the newest member – is the stoic, no bullshit bassist.

They've been keeping busy playing shows and have several splits planned, including one with fellow Harbor Area band Alter Boys and another with Gardena's Los Brigands. There's also a raft of merch coming at fans.

"We're going to become a streetwear brand called DV8," Banks said.

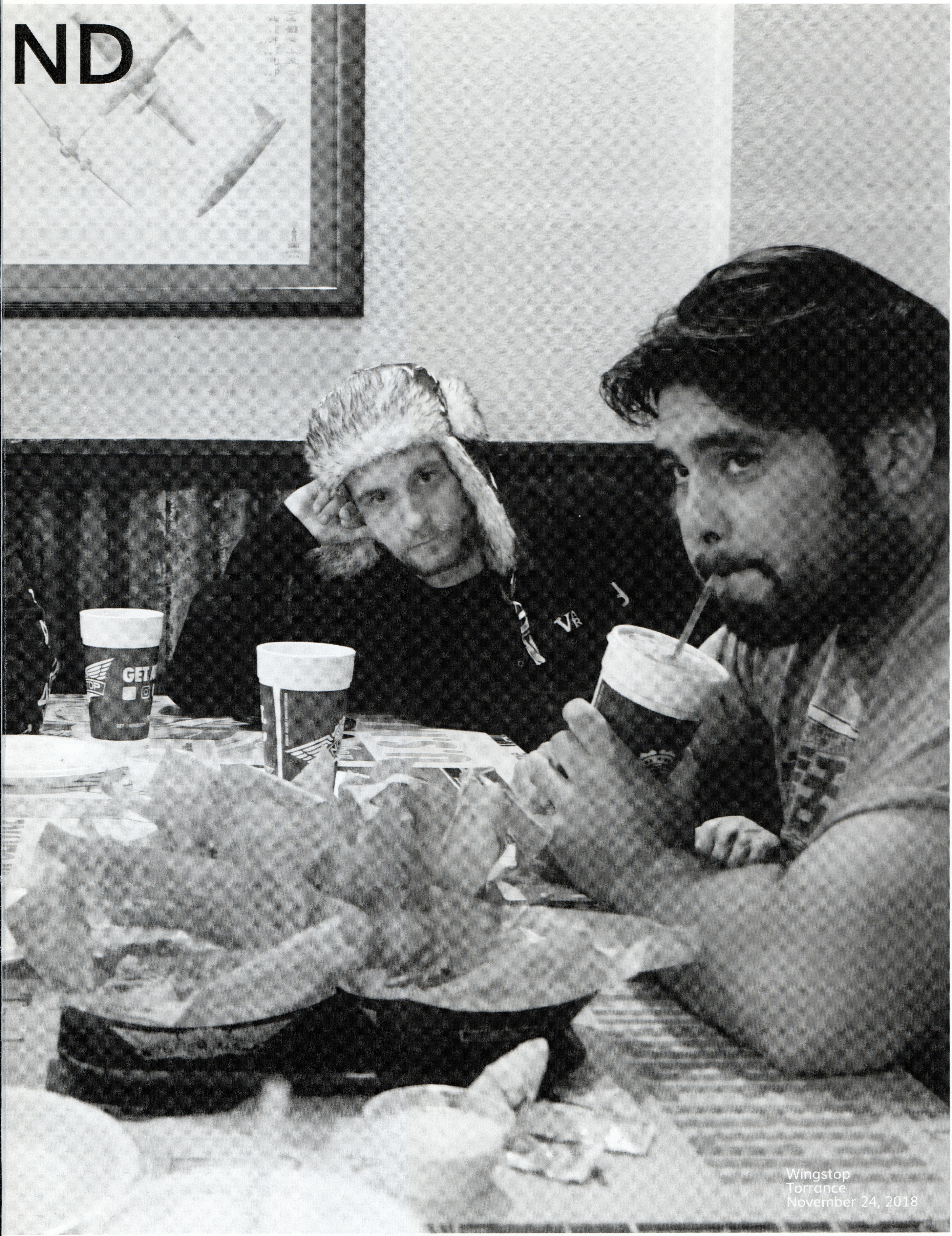
That's a joke, by the way.

With three more years under their belt, they've only refined their sound, offering the scene an album they hand out for free to anyone willing to listen. They're like the boys next door, kind of.

What follows is a look at this band, in their own words, as they talk about the impetus for some of their songs and what they're all working towards.

Pull up a chair. Come join the crew.

ND



Wingstop
Torrance
November 24, 2018

LIKE YESTERDAY

Sean Palce: You followed up perfectly.

Joey T. Banks: We released the album [referenced in 2015] in the summer.

Palce: We went through a few different bassists to find one that was reliable and one that could actually play. So we found Johnny. We're just trying to be active, not be stagnant and just play shows.

Johnny Ramirez: I ran into Joe at a backyard show in Hawaiian Gardens. It was Catacomb Rockers, Deviated State. I think Street Threat played. It was a long time ago. I ran into him; he was just shit-faced drunk. I was drunk too. And that was it.

SOMEWHERE IN THE MIDDLE

Laying out the album.

Caveman: The way I see it is we're doing different styles so you want to be able to tell the difference between our songs. You don't want to have all the fast songs together. You want an even flow. Catch them off guard like a live show

Palce: Yeah, you don't want to have all the bangers the first five songs, because then the rest of the album's slow.

Banks: We say they're all love songs, but they're not.

Caveman: When you first see the lyrics you're like 'Oh this is kind of cheesy.' I mean that's what I thought. I just like – I never heard the lyrics. In my mind, I'm playing it hard as hell because I'm thinking I'm trying to put in the work.... I didn't mind. Push comes to shove, it was real

Palce: Push comes to hug.

[laughter as Caveman simultaneously starts coughing]

Caveman: Fool, chill. I'm about to choke, though.

Palce: Breathe. Positive vibes.

Caveman: Caught me mid-bite, you know.

SHOW NOT TELL

Stories served in seconds.

Banks: [The album "No Way Out"] It's pretty much about being stuck and not going anywhere in your life. That first song, when I say "I'm stagnant," I'm stuck. If you're not improving, you're pretty much sinking, I guess.

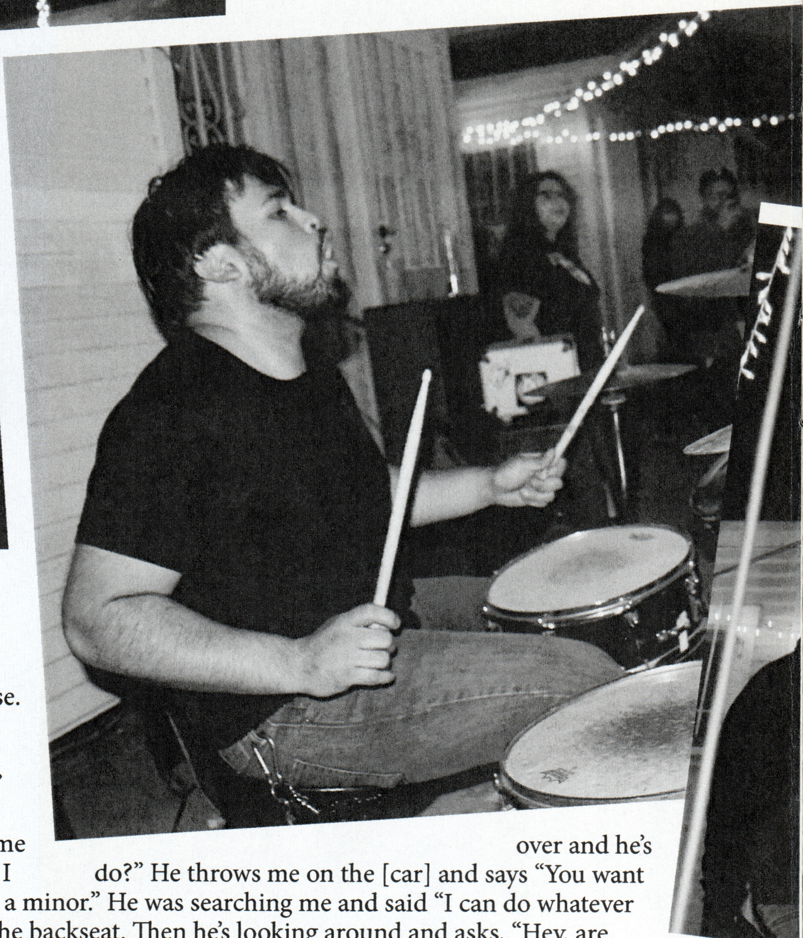
The song "Strung Out," that's just pretty much the power of meth. Watching your family and your friends succumb to drugs and watching them with the potential they had and you realize they're not the same anymore. That was our straight edge song, but I didn't want to get preachy. "Numb" is about someone dieing.

I don't want to say exactly what it's about because it ruins the content. To me that's basic life. It's that whole don't tell me how you feel, show me how you feel type of thing.

It makes for a better story. It's more intriguing. And someone could make this whole new meaning from it.

[The songs] were written probably from '15 to '18. [Singing] it doesn't take me back. The love songs kind of do. If the show's boring, it's just like "Let's get the fuck out of here and go do something." I'm not going to say I feel [the lyrics] every time and I'm seeing flashbacks.

TVA OR DIE
電話番号



A SONG FOR THE COPS

The stories behind "ACAB."

Banks: I was like, what, 7 years old. The cops raided my house. Had the full SWAT come in and I was just getting out of the shower. A cop breaks in and points one of those M16s at me. Straight to my face. I was [thinking] like "Yo, what the fuck?" He was like "Freeze." That was experience one.

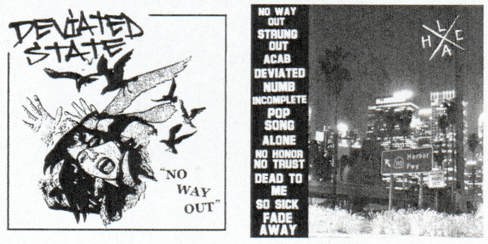
Experience two. I was actually skating around. A cop pulls me over and he's like "Put your hand on the [car]." I was like "Why? What did I do?" He throws me on the [car] and says "You want to get smart with me?" I was like "You can't pull me over. I'm a minor." He was searching me and said "I can do whatever the fuck I want to." And then he handcuffed me, puts me in the backseat. Then he's looking around and asks, "Hey, are you a lawyer?" I was like "No." And he was like "Good. Then why the fuck are you questioning me?" I was 14 or 15. He said "If I see you driving around when you're older I'm going to fuck you up. I'll take you to jail for any reason I want to. Don't you ever question – you say 'Yes sir' or 'No sir' whenever you see us or talk to us." This was in Carson.

Palce: Me and [Caveman] were in the car – he ran a stop sign. We get pulled over. He has a samurai sword in his car. In the back seat completely visible to the cops. Completely visible. They look at it like "What's that for?" So they take me out of the car and they said "Do you have anything I should know about?" And I said "Yeah, I have a knife right here that I use for work opening boxes." OK, so they searched the car. The commanding officer, he grabs the knife and there's a little hole in the bottom of the blade. So, basically, you could use that as brass knuckles. So I was arrested and incarcerated because of that and they let [Caveman] go with the samurai sword completey unsheathed.

Caveman: Sorry, Sean.

Banks: It's [the song ACAB] one of those drunk punk songs.

Caveman: It's like drunken minds, sober shit. You know?



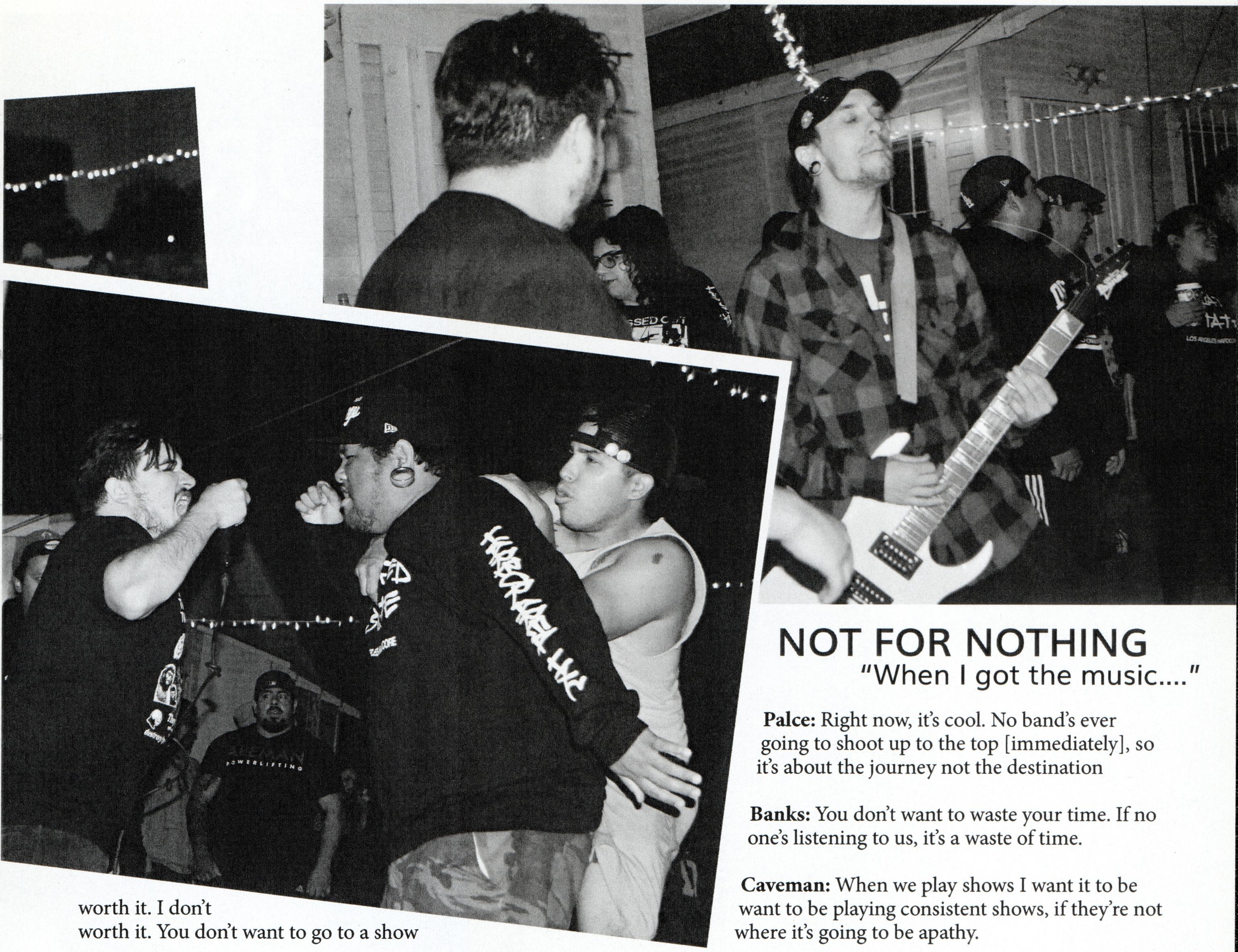
ON SPOTIFY AND APPLE

GROWN UP TIME

The more things change, the more....

Banks: The thing with the punk scene is there's a lot of turnover. When I was 15, 16, I'd go to a show. Everyone there was my friend. Then you see the next generation and they have their whole lives, their whole spot. You still have it, but it's not like before.

Caveman: I see it [the song "Fade Away"] as some people have their homies die and it's like, oh shit. Some people can never get that back so you only live with the memories that you have. That's how it goes.



NOT FOR NOTHING

"When I got the music...."

Palce: Right now, it's cool. No band's ever going to shoot up to the top [immediately], so it's about the journey not the destination

Banks: You don't want to waste your time. If no one's listening to us, it's a waste of time.

Caveman: When we play shows I want it to be worth it. I don't want to be playing consistent shows, if they're not worth it. You don't want to go to a show where it's going to be apathy.

Banks: When we see someone singing [along], that makes it all worth it. That makes all the bullshit, the practice, all the money wasted... that's why you play.

LOOKING AHEAD

Home is where...

Johnny: I see myself moving away for sure I live in Hawaiian Gardens. I want to move out of SoCal. It's too expensive. I want something a little less fast paced, away from the city. Eventually, maybe Seattle or somehwere in Oregon. Somewhere green and clean. Maybe like in 10 years or so.

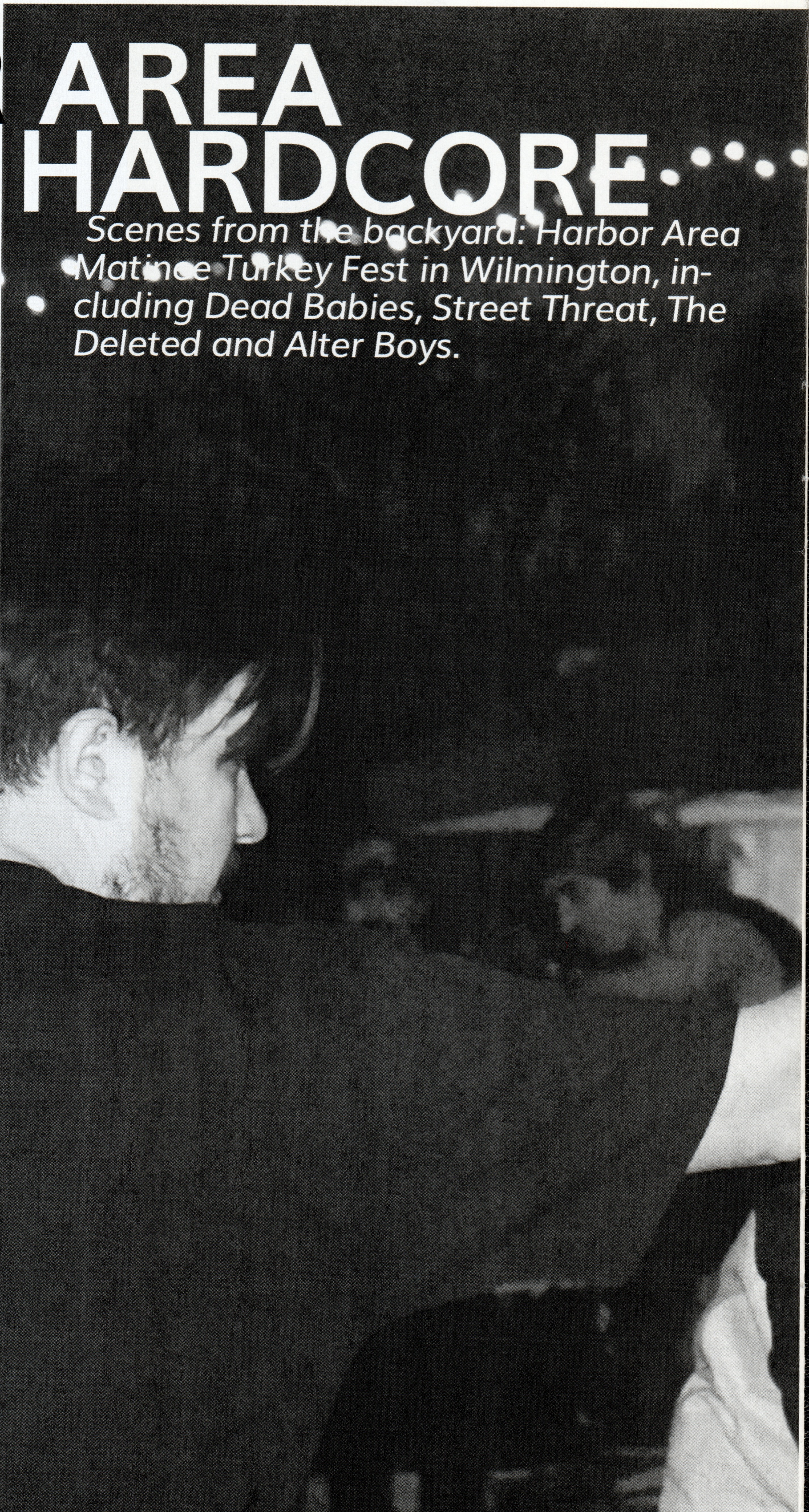
Palce: I can't really say where I'll be 10 years from now. I haven't really thought that far ahead. I haven't even thought about tomorrow. I'm kind of just living in the moment. All my friends are here. I don't want to meet new people. I'd rather just stay in my ecosystem. If I need to move, I will. But I'm not looking forward to it.

Caveman: I mean, I like Cali obviously. I would like to stay here, but if things change I probably would move. I've thought about going back to Mexico or some shit. I was born in Mexico. you know. Obviously, this is my home out here. But just [depending on] how things turn out I'd rather be out there.

Banks: I do not plan on leaving L.A. at all. I love living in LA. I live in the South Bay. Carson, to me, that's perfect. I've been riding trains since I was younger. I used to take the train and shit. We [my mom and I] used to have lunch in MacArthur Park. It was the early 2000s. Echo Park before it got gentrified.

I just love the area. It's home. And it's not just one particular city. It's everywhere.

HARBOR AREA HARDCORE



Scenes from the backyard: Harbor Area Matinee Turkey Fest in Wilmington, including Dead Babies, Street Threat, The Deleted and Alter Boys.

ON DIY:

Nick: *That's why we all have our main jobs. We've got that to take care of ourselves. This [band] is a self-funded hobby.*

Tony: *We're pretty much DIY, and we will never pay to play. Done that before.*

Nick: *We don't believe in that. I'm not paying you to perform.*

Tony: *Any band out there, never pay to play. Fuck that bullshit. Sorry. It's not worth it 'cause if you don't sell those tickets, it's out of your fucking pocket.*

Jack: *Remember we did that when we were 15, 16 years old?*

Tony: *"Hey, mom. Hey, tio. Hey, aunty. Want to buy our ticket?" "Yeah, mijo. I got you." You know what I'm saying? Then when we got older, they were like "Nah, nah, nah. We're not going to pay for that shit." And we would have to pay a bill out of pocket to play.... That's why, yeah, total DIY. We're not here for the money.*

◆

Alter Boys guitarist Nick, singer Jack and drummer Tony.

THE BASTARD SUNS

Backyard Show
Wilmington
November 10, 2018

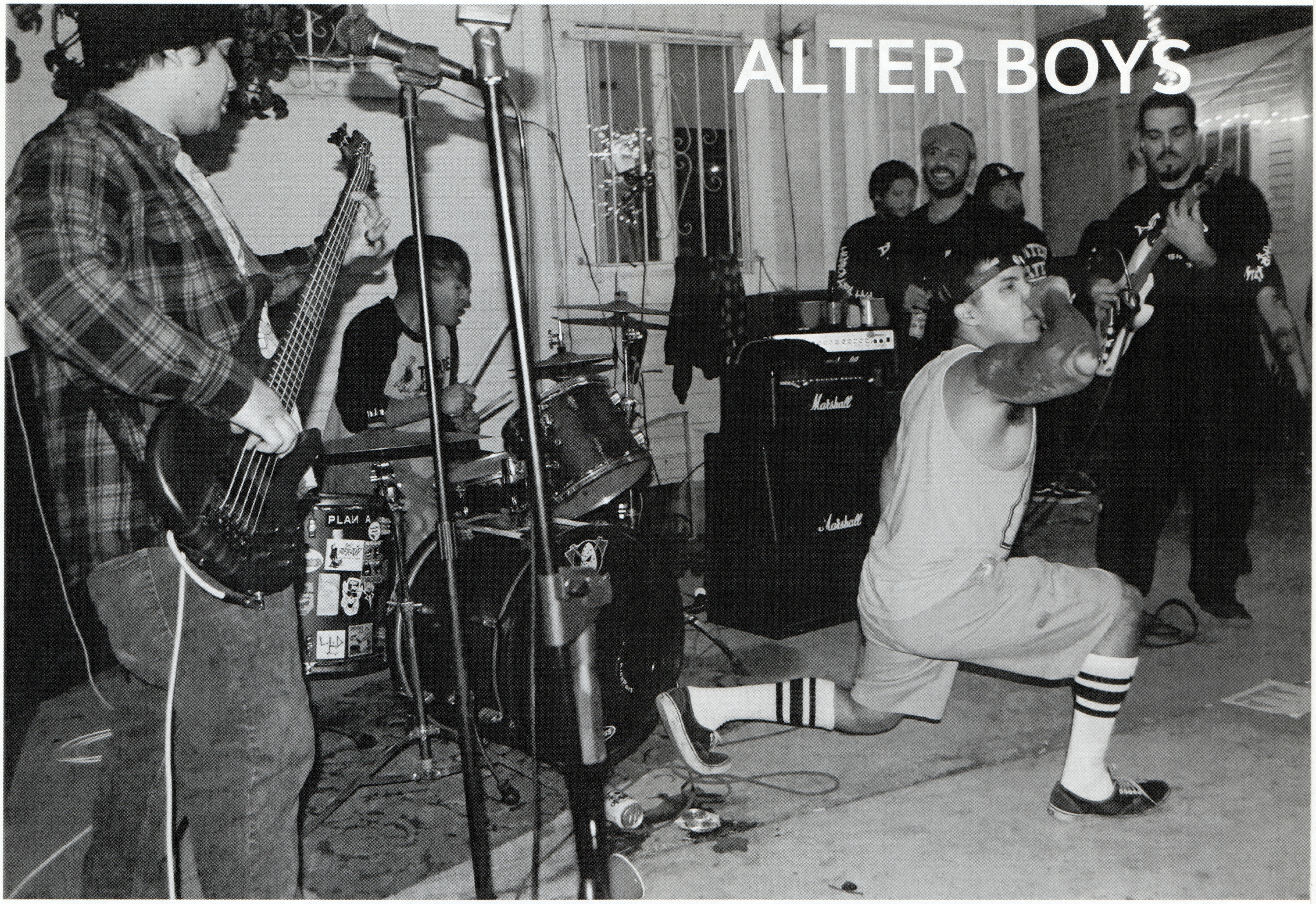
DEAD BABIES

STREET THREAT

UNDERGROUND
U·A
5
ALLIANCE

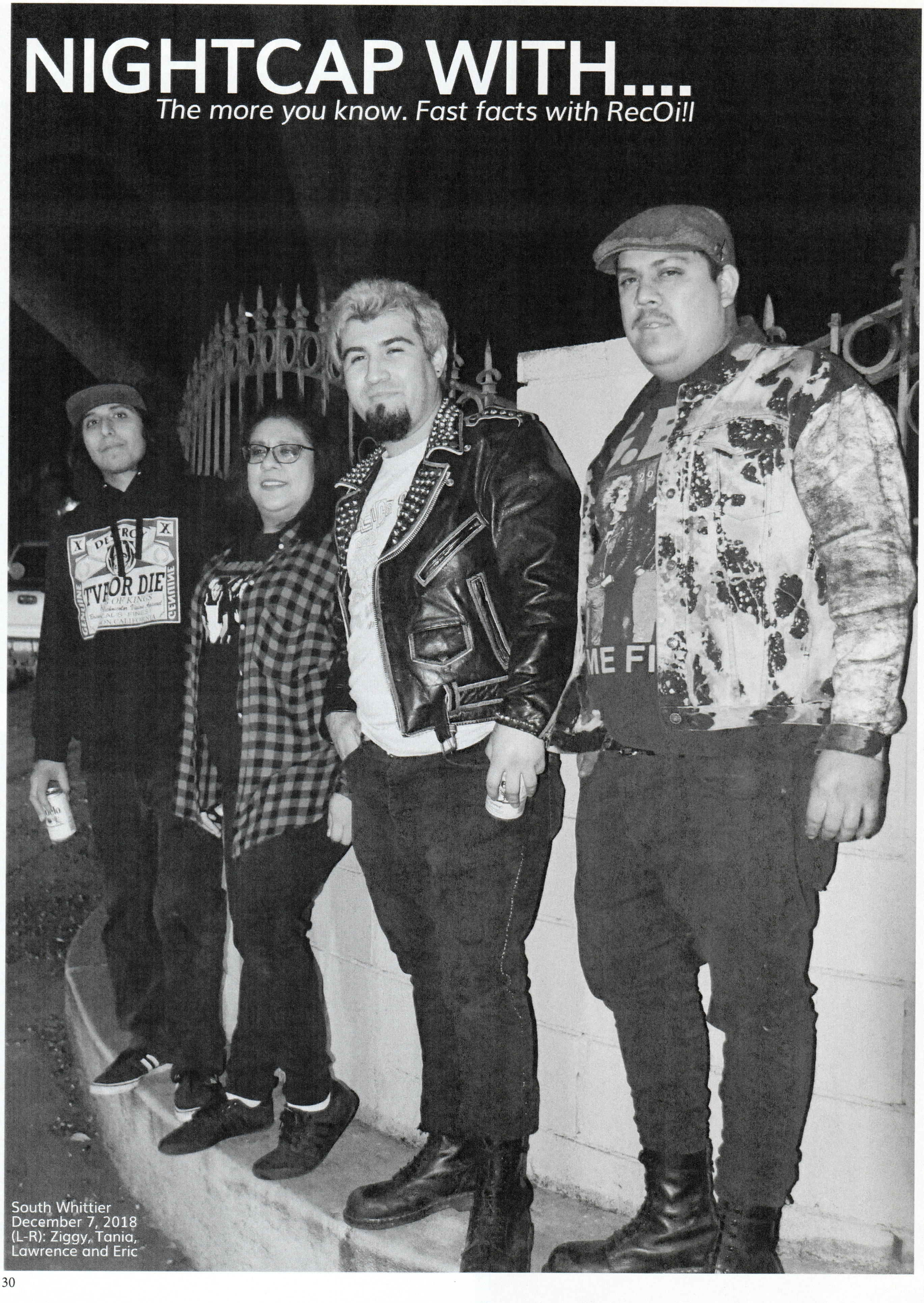
THE DELETED

ALTER BOYS



NIGHTCAP WITH....

The more you know. Fast facts with RecOi!l



South Whittier
December 7, 2018
(L-R): Ziggy, Tania,
Lawrence and Eric

BALDWIN PARK, CALIF. – “Get your dad,” a woman said tersely, rushing out from the VFW Baldwin Park’s backyard.

“It’s over,” one guy standing at the back of the yard said as another could be overheard telling security, “I’m not right in the head.”

Not long after, the story of what transpired was pieced together: Too many kids sneaking in alcohol, being warned not to, ignoring the instructions and then someone getting downright belligerent about the rules, ending the night prematurely and maybe future shows at the venue.

“Fuck that guy whoever said ‘Shit on the owner,’” RecOi!l bassist Ziggy said. “There were little girls there saying ‘Did he really say shit on my mom?’”

Twenty minutes south of that debacle, the members of Harbor Area band RecOi!l – Ziggy, guitarist and backup vocalist Tania, singer Lawrence (a.k.a. Toothpick) and drummer Dirty Eric (previously of Dirty Rebels) – are standing on the driveway of a South Whittier home. It’s 10 p.m. and they’ve deferred to a kickback at a friend’s house.

Rancid’s playing in the background at one point and shots, a guest said as he made his way up the walk, are mandatory.

It will be three years in April that RecOi!l formed, with a name born out of a group backyard brainstorming session in which the only directives were it reference pogo and contain the word “oi.” Eric’s sister Tania came on board this year, replacing Caveman (Deviated State drummer). She had tried unsuccessfully to earlier get in the band jokingly (or not?) explaining Lawrence eventually came crawling back.

“The only thing I regret is not getting her from the get go,” he said.

“Nah, it’s cool,” she told him graciously. “You needed to learn.”

Read on and meet RecOi!l.

It seems as though the Harbor Area bands are all pretty tight-knit and you’re one big family. Fair assessment?

Eric: We’re all close. We’re all about the same age. We all went to high school together. We all started around the same time. It helps that we’re all from around the same city.

Lawrence: We’re all friends, so we’ve always had each other’s backs. It’s not like we’re trying to represent Harbor Area only. We don’t try to do the whole locals-only thing. It’s just, that’s where we’re coming from and we’re showing the punk scene’s not dead in this area.

Tania: We also got into each other’s families. We know each other’s mothers. We go to each other’s holiday parties, so it runs deeper than just the scene.

Eric: There are like three, four bands where we all hang out together – Deviated State, Catacomb Rockers, Alter Boys.

Complete this sentence: “We sound like....”

Tania: We sound like fun. No, not the band.

Ziggy: [singing] ‘F’ is for friends who do stuff together....

Tania: We sound better when you’re drunker.”

Lawrence: We sound pogo.

Tania: Since we were little kids, [Eric’s] always had a melody, so we were very good at the melodies and creating. He’ll think in layers. We don’t even have to look at each other.

What’s the backstory on some of your nicknames?

Eric: Toothpick as a young buck in high school, he was 14 years old. He liked to put a little bit of Murray’s in his hair. He was a greaser. He had cuffed pants, cuffed shirt. Nice, clean cut.... We said “Kick it with us.” The first day he came, introduced himself to everybody. Five minutes later, I forget his name, but he had a toothpick in his mouth and was really skinny. To be dead honest, I didn’t know his name for a long time. We were talking and [my friends] were like “Hey, call this fool over.” I was just like, fuck. I said, “Hey, Toothpick.” He turns around. Cool, and that’s been his name forever.

Ziggy: Mine’s family. I was born in the hospital.

Eric: Were you now?

Ziggy: Hey! I could have been born in a bar bathroom, you know. I was lucky to be born in a hospital.

Eric: Dumpster baby. What the fuck.

Lawrence: Prom night.

Ziggy: The real story is I was stuck in a hospital for two days and I didn’t have a name. My cousin came and saw me. I looked like Ziggy from the newspaper with a big ass nose that you can see. They called me Ziggy and they [later] gave me Vincent. I grew up thinking my name was Ziggy. I went to school in first grade and they were like “Vincent, are you here?” I didn’t raise my hand. I went years not knowing my name was Vincent.

What are your goals for the new year as a band?

Lawrence: I set a few goals in my head, but haven’t discussed with them. I want to go somewhere out of state. We’ve been offered to go to New Jersey, Texas and Denver. So my goal is to just record in January and then somebody hits us up by summer.

Eric: January for sure we’re going to put out a quick EP and then around the same time we’re going to do a music video for one of our songs. We’re in the works for another video, too, with Broken Cuffs and then just playing more shows.

Lawrence: We have a car issue right now.

Ziggy: Yeah, the car we have is too small.

101/400

Est. 2004
Los Angeles
@paradigm_zine
paradigmzine.com

DEVIATED STATE
Wilmington
November 10, 2018
(L-R): Sean Palce, guitar; Joey T. Banks, vocals; Jack, Alter Boys vocals.